

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 19, 2017

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary DeVos:

It was of deep concern that we learned of your plan to revoke or rescind sexual assault policies under Title IX at the U.S. Department of Education. As you know, under Title IX schools have a responsibility to prevent and investigate incidents of sexual violence and harassment. We must ensure this policy protects survivors across the country.

Guidance issued by the Department on Title IX enforcement helps ensure that no school administrator will ignore allegations of rape and sexual assault. It pushes them to do better, and not just through words, but with real consequences if their responses are not adequate. This policy must be robustly enforced to protect survivors across the country.

We hear constant stories from survivors of sexual assault in both K-12 schools and universities. They detail how they have been raped or experienced inappropriate sexual behavior and are suffering deeply as a result. Even when a school does the right thing and reports the assault, survivors are ostracized in classrooms and on campus for coming forward, isolated and alone. To them, Title IX is everything and weakening or eroding this landmark law would take away hope for survivors when they already have few places to turn. We must continue to go forward – not take unnecessary steps backward.

It was also disappointing that no survivor groups were invited to your announcement at George Mason University. Including these groups is essential in ensuring the Department hears all voices when crafting policies that are responsive to the needs of survivors. It is our hope that you will do a better job of engaging survivors moving forward.

Going backwards is simply unacceptable and failing to provide a safe, transparent, and fair environment to survivors is not something we will entertain. As you continue these proceedings, we urge you to not weaken enforcement of Title IX in both K-12 settings and on college campuses. We will continue to keep a close eye on this issue to ensure the survivors of sexual assault are protected.

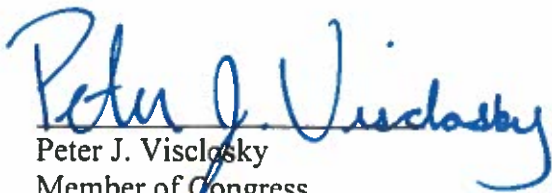
Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



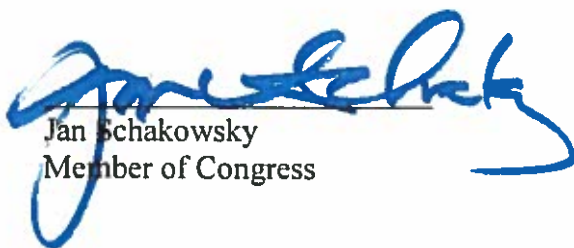
Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



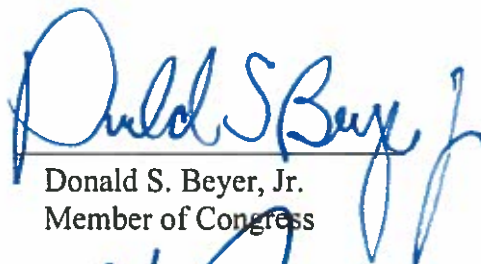
Peter J. Visclosky
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



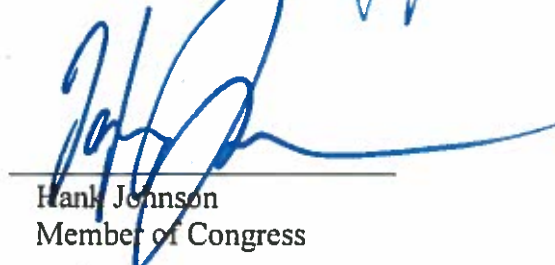
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Member of Congress



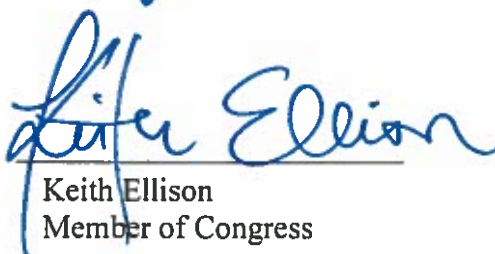
Jacky Rosen
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson
Member of Congress



Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Anne McLane Kuster
Member of Congress